

image

49

MAY

DIGITAL
EDITION

SPAWN



image® COMICS PRESENTS:

"HELTER SKELTER"



story

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In Memory of:
MICHIKO MITSEY MIKI

Spawn #48 Summary:

While Burke is proudly showing Twitch the stylish new digs for their soon-to-be agency, an ominous envelope arrives under the door. Inside, are photos of men previously linked to Chief Banks, and a request for a meeting. We later learn that Wynn and Clown are behind the deadly set-up. Spawn and Cog have an altercation in Rat City. Enraged, Spawn warns Cog to tell all that he knows, or stay away forever. Terry's suspicions about Wynn's illegal activities are finally confirmed, but as he happily tells Julia that he's found what he was looking for, Wynn enters the room saying that he is anxious to read the results. As Terry laments over the possible danger this poses to his life, he has a brief blackout. Although it is now apparent that something is seriously wrong, he doesn't tell Wanda for fear of upsetting her. Meanwhile, the bums begin to question Al's loyalty and friendship. Spawn finds Bobby alone in the alley and instructs him to tell the others he's left, then disappears to complete a private mission.

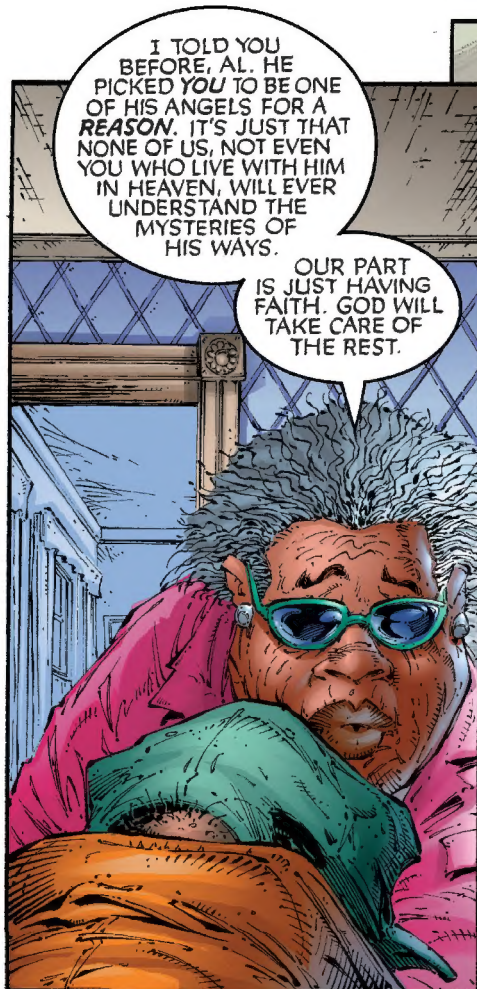
FOR IMAGE COMICS
LARRY MARDER - exec. director

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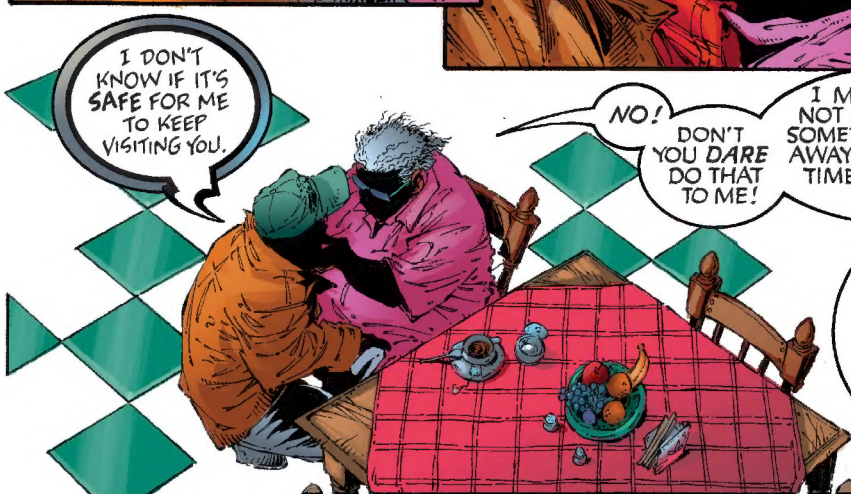
I TOLD YOU BEFORE, AL. HE PICKED YOU TO BE ONE OF HIS ANGELS FOR A **REASON**. IT'S JUST THAT NONE OF US, NOT EVEN YOU WHO LIVE WITH HIM IN HEAVEN, WILL EVER UNDERSTAND THE MYSTERIES OF HIS WAYS.

OUR PART IS JUST HAVING FAITH. GOD WILL TAKE CARE OF THE REST.



IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE. AT LEAST NOT NOW. WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME IS PUTTING OTHERS IN DANGER. INCLUDING YOU.

WHAT'RE YOU SAYING?



I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S **SAFE** FOR ME TO KEEP VISITING YOU.

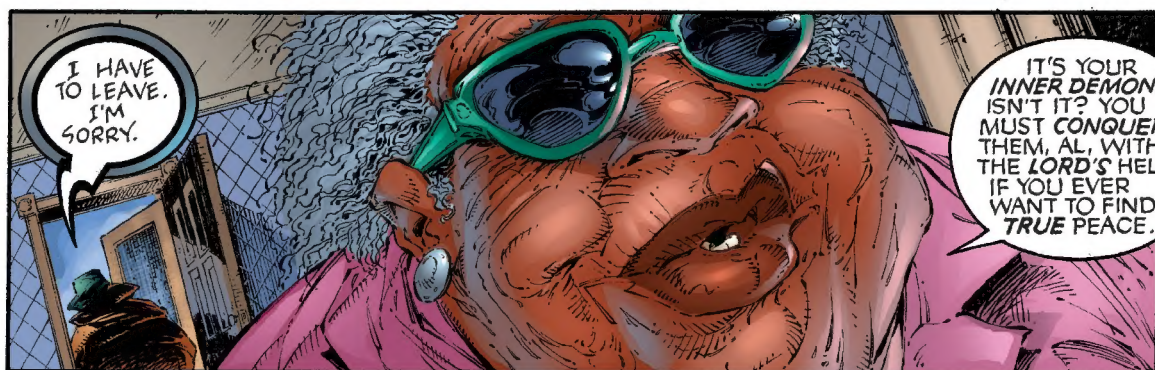
NO!

DON'T YOU **DARE** DO THAT TO ME!

I MAY BE OLD BUT I'M NOT STUPID. I'VE SENSED SOMETHING HAS BEEN GNAWING AWAY AT YOU FOR QUITE SOME TIME. BUT YOU DON'T RUN AWAY FROM THAT.

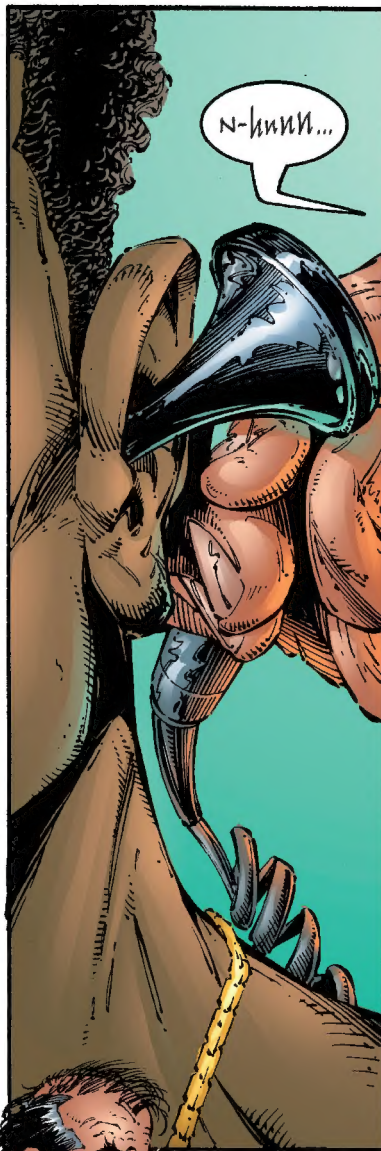
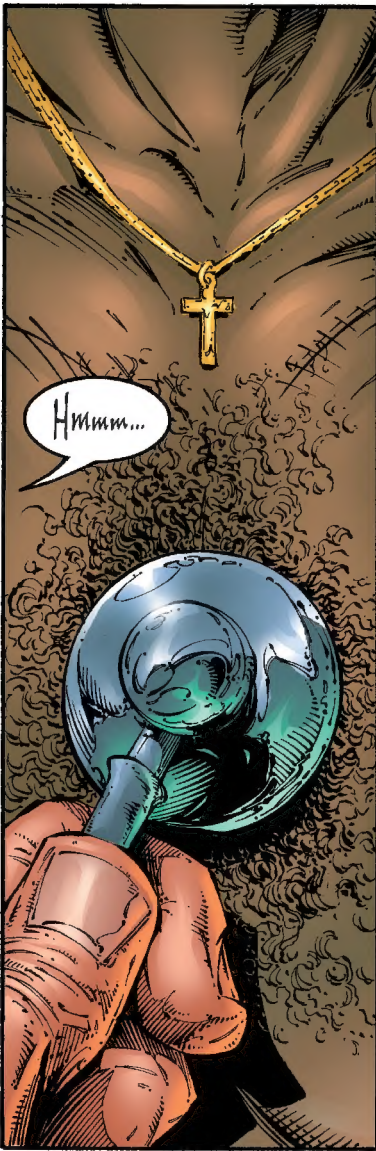
YOU NEVER RAN WHEN YOU WERE ALIVE, SO DON'T START NOW. THIS FEELING HAS BEEN GNAWING AWAY AT YOU FOR QUITE SOME TIME. BUT YOU DON'T RUN AWAY FROM THAT. **CAST IT ASIDE**. DON'T ABANDON THOSE WHO CAN HELP YOU.

WE ALL **LOVE** YOU TOO MUCH.



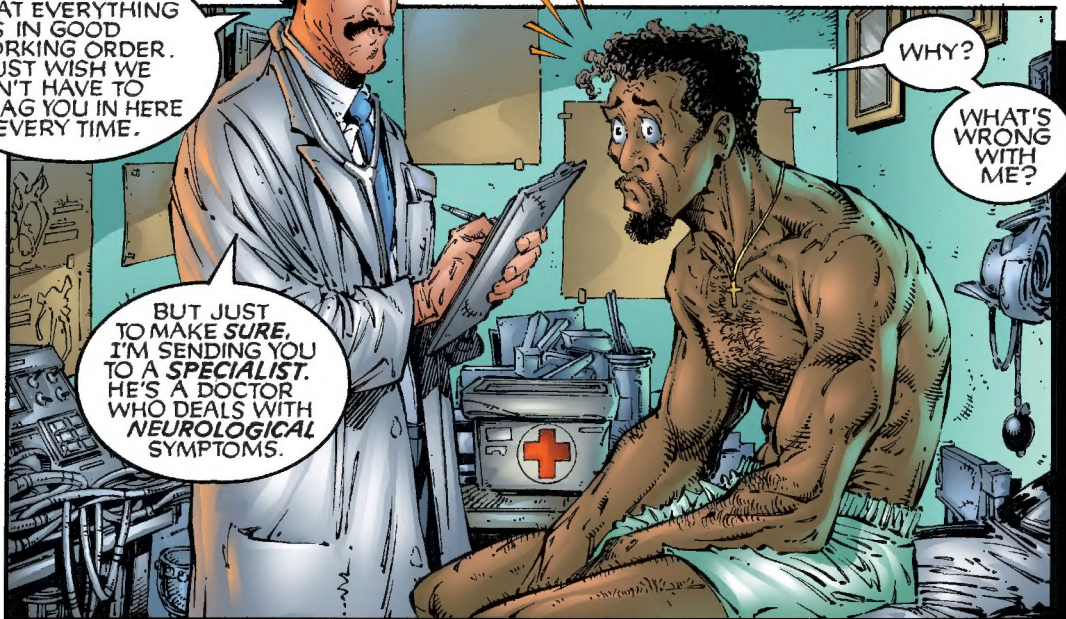
I HAVE TO LEAVE. I'M SORRY.

IT'S YOUR **INNER DEMONS**. ISN'T IT? YOU MUST **CONQUER** THEM, AL, WITH THE **LORD'S** HELP. IF YOU EVER WANT TO FIND **TRUE PEACE**.



IT APPEARS THAT EVERYTHING IS IN GOOD WORKING ORDER. I JUST WISH WE DIDN'T HAVE TO DRAG YOU IN HERE EVERY TIME.

BUT JUST TO MAKE SURE, I'M SENDING YOU TO A **SPECIALIST**. HE'S A DOCTOR WHO DEALS WITH **NEUROLOGICAL** SYMPTOMS.

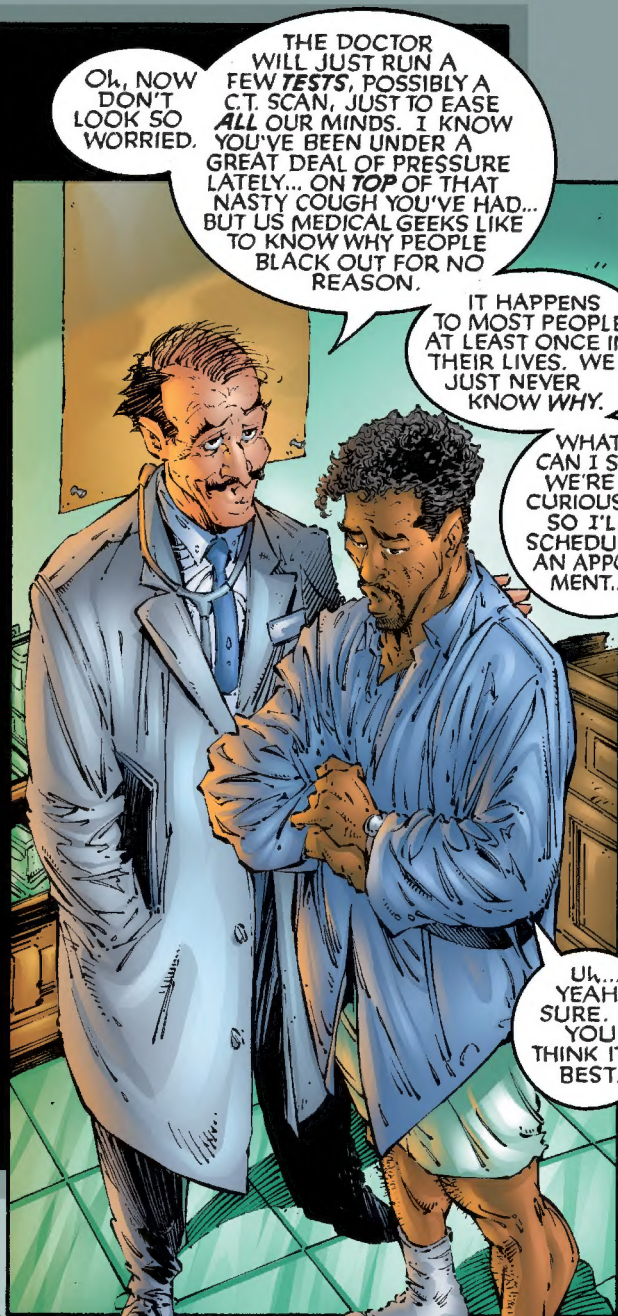




NOTHING, I HOPE... BUT YOUR FAINTING SPELL TELLS ME THAT SOMETHING WENT WRONG. *

I JUST LIKE TO BE CERTAIN I HAVEN'T OVERLOOKED ANYTHING.

* LAST ISSUE -- Tom...



OK, NOW DON'T LOOK SO WORRIED.

THE DOCTOR WILL JUST RUN A FEW TESTS, POSSIBLY A C.T. SCAN, JUST TO EASE ALL OUR MINDS. I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN UNDER A GREAT DEAL OF PRESSURE LATELY... ON TOP OF THAT NASTY COUGH YOU'VE HAD... BUT US MEDICAL GEEKS LIKE TO KNOW WHY PEOPLE BLACK OUT FOR NO REASON.

IT HAPPENS TO MOST PEOPLE AT LEAST ONCE IN THEIR LIVES. WE JUST NEVER KNOW WHY.

WHAT CAN I SAY? WE'RE A CURIOUS LOT. SO I'LL SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT...?

UH... YEAH, SURE. IF YOU THINK IT'S BEST.



Coff=


Coff=

Coff=

OUT IN THE PARKING LOT, TERRY'S CHEST BEGINS TO TIGHTEN AS HIS MIND SWIRLS WITH FABRICATED IMAGES AND THOUGHTS.

IT TRIGGERS A SLIGHT COUGHING FIT.

HE CURSES HIMSELF FOR NOT DOING SOMETHING EARLIER.



WHAT'S HAPPENING?

GODDAMMIT!
WHAT'S HAPPENING
TO ME?

THIS MADNESS. I THOUGHT
I'D GET AWAY FROM IT, NOT
HAVE IT FOLLOW ME. NOT
HERE!

NOT IN
RAT
CITY.



I WANTED TO
BE SAFE.

BUT I CAN'T.
I'LL NEVER BE
FREE, NOW.

NEVER.

IT'S ME.
I'M THE
ONE. IT
LIVES IN
ME.

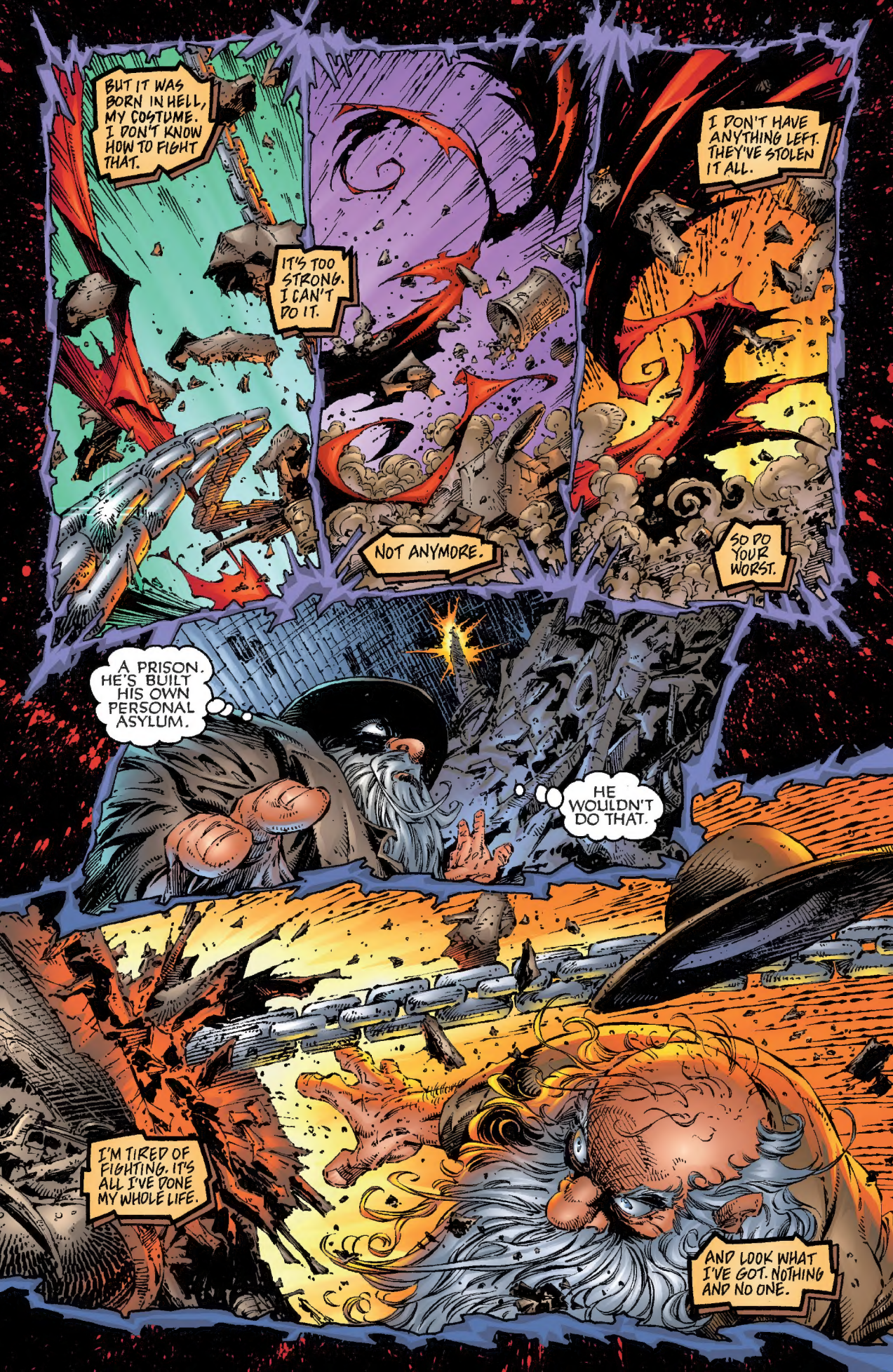


WANTING TO
KILL. TO HURT
EVERYONE.
JUST SO I'LL
LEARN TO BE
LIKE IT.

LEARN TO HATE
EVERYTHING.



AL,
WHAT HAVE
YOU DONE TO
YOURSELF?



BUT IT WAS
BORN IN HELL,
MY COSTUME.
I DON'T KNOW
HOW TO FIGHT
THAT.

IT'S TOO
STRONG.
I CAN'T
DO IT.

I DON'T HAVE
ANYTHING LEFT.
THEY'VE STOLEN
IT ALL.

NOT ANYMORE.

SO DO
YOUR
WORST.

A PRISON.
HE'S BUILT
HIS OWN
PERSONAL
ASYLUM.

HE
WOULDN'T
DO THAT.

I'M TIRED OF
FIGHTING. IT'S
ALL I'VE DONE
MY WHOLE LIFE.

AND LOOK WHAT
I'VE GOT. NOTHING
AND NO ONE.

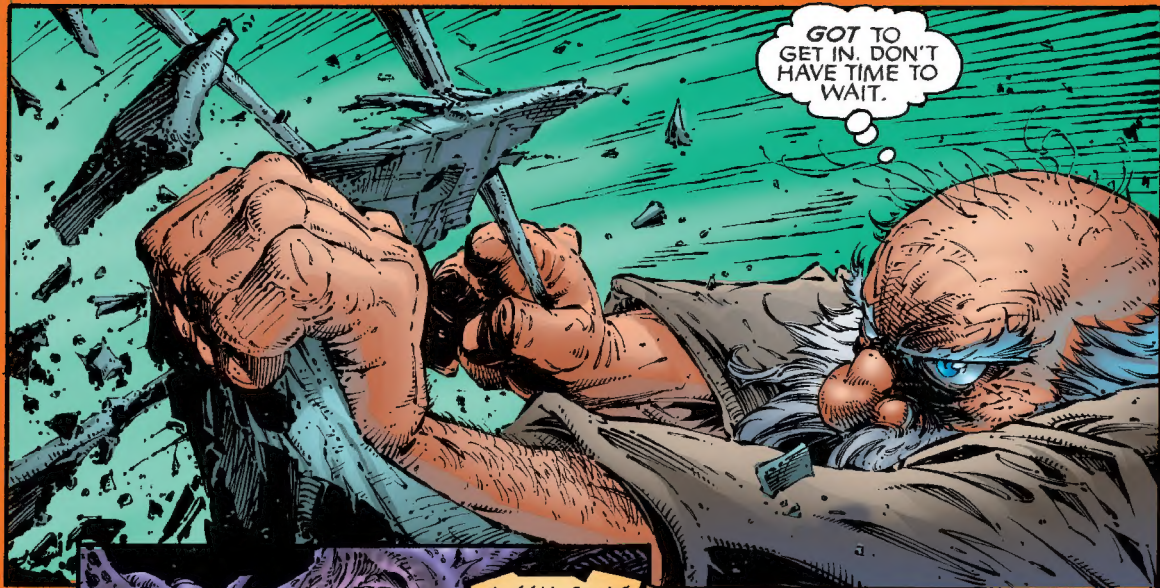
THE COSTUME'S GOT SOME KIND OF INFECTION-- MAKING IT ERRATIC. AL DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO READ THE SYMPTOMS. AND IF HE DOESN'T STOP IT FROM SPREADING, THE SYBIOTE WILL ADVANCE TO NECRO-STATE NINE BEFORE IT'S READY FOR THAT LEVEL.

AL!

HELP ME! WHERE'S THE OPENING?



GOT TO GET IN. DON'T HAVE TIME TO WAIT.



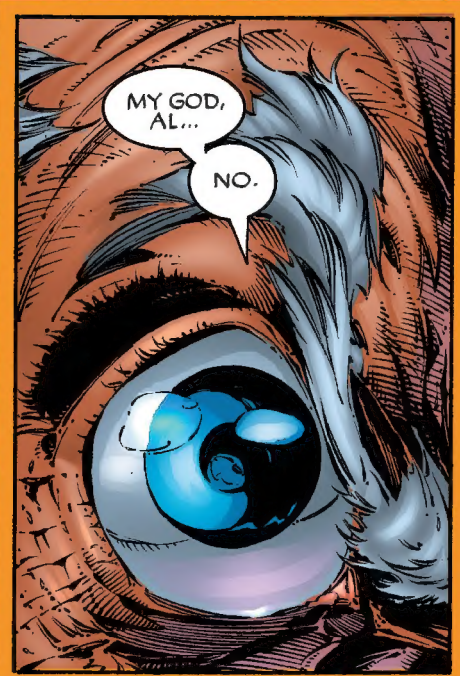
I STILL DON'T KNOW HOW THE OLD MAN GOT IN.

BUT HE DID.



MY GOD, AL...

NO.





IN ANOTHER
OF THE CITY'S
MILLION SHADOWS...


WHAT
A SAP.
WHAT A
MAROON.

IF JASON
WYNN IS
THE **BEST**
EXAMPLE OF
"DISPICABLE"
THESE
HUMANS CAN
MUSTER...

...THEN
I COULD
BE KING OF
THIS PLANET
TOMORROW.

HE'S GOT
THE **EVILNESS**,
I'LL GIVE HIM THAT,
BUT I'M ABLE TO
KNEAD HIM JUST
TOO **EASILY** INTO
WHATEVER
I WANT.

HERO.
SCAPEGOAT.
ASSASSIN.
POLITICIAN. I'VE
MADE HIM PLAY 'EM
ALL. HE DOESN'T
EVEN **RESIST** MUCH...
UNLIKE **YOU**, MY
DEAR FURRY
FRIEND.



AT LEAST
YOU PUT
UP A **FIGHT**
FOR...

IT TAKES
A FULL
THIRTY
SECONDS
FOR THE
SIGNAL TO
PENETRATE.

YES!

YES. YES. YES.

THIS IS
PERFECT!
SIMMONS IS
GETTING **CRAPPED**
ON BY HIS
SYMBIOTE. I ALWAYS
DID **LOVE** THOSE
K-MODEL UNITS.
THEY'RE
ALWAYS SO
VOLITILE.

Hee Hee

I MEAN, I
KNEW SOMETHING
WAS UP WITH SPAWN
AND HIS UNIFORM...
BUT
THIS?! EVEN I
COULDN'T HAVE
PREDICTED IT WOULD
HAPPEN **THIS**
QUICK!

Hee Hee
HoHo!

I'M TELLING
YOU, LITTLE FRIEND,
THIS COULD SAVE ME
A COUPLE **MONTHS**
OF GROUNDWORK.
JUST THINK-- **NOT**
HAVING TO FOOL
AROUND WITH WYNN.
OR FITZGERALD.
OR BLAKE.

JUST
STRAIGHT
TO THE
MOTHERLODE!
BAM! AND
SIMMONS
HAS A ONE-WAY
TICKET BACK
TO **HELL.**

I CAN
TASTE
THE
VICTORY
NOW--

GULP!



GOD.


HE WAS ALL I
COULD THINK OF
THEN. AS THE
COSTUME THRASHED
ABOUT, TRYING TO
SPILL MY GUTS ON
THE GROUND,
IT WAS GOD I
THOUGHT OF.

WHY WOULD HE
CREATE ALL THIS?

WHY WOULD
HE WANT TO?

DAMN
YOU,
MALEBOLGIA.

MY ANGER AT HIM
WAS ALL I HAD
LEFT: THE ONLY
DISTRACTION BIG
ENOUGH TO HELP
ME FORGET THE PAIN.



EVEN AS THE TUMORS
GREW AND MY GUTS
SPILLED FORTH, IT WAS
ANGER AT HIM THAT
POSSESSED ME.

GOD MADE SATAN.
SATAN MADE HELL.
HELL MADE MALEBOLGIA.
MALEBOLGIA MADE
THIS COSTUME.

SO IT'S FROM
HIM. FROM
GOD THAT
ALL THIS
EVIL COMES.

IT'S HIS
FAULT.

SOMEHOW, HE
WANTED OR
NEEDED THIS.

MY LOGIC MADE NO SENSE.
IT DIDN'T MATTER. IT
SERVED THE PURPOSE
UNTIL ANOTHER DISTRACTION
APPEARED.

AL!
FIGHT IT!
FIGHT THE
PAIN!

IT'S FEEDING
OFF YOUR
EMOTIONS!

CAGLIOSTRO.

"THE COUNT." HE CALLS HIMSELF. ALWAYS APPEARS OUT OF NOWHERE, LIKE SOME FRIGGIN' HOODOO MAN.

HE KNOWS THINGS... STUFF HE SHOULDN'T KNOW THE FIRST THING ABOUT. HOW? WHY?



AND HIS EYES. I'LL NEVER FORGET THEM. THEY GLARE WITH A DEFIANCE LIKE I'VE NEVER SEEN.

AT FIRST, IT DIDN'T SEEM TO MATTER WHEN THE CREATURE REACTED, SWALLOWING THE OLD MAN WHOLE.

EVEN WHEN A HUGE, SERPENTINE PIECE OF THE CLOAK SNARED HIM, HE DIDN'T APPEAR SCARED.

IT WAS MORE LIKE HE WAS WAITING FOR IT. SOMEHOW PREPARED FOR WHAT WAS TO HAPPEN.

THE COUNT NEVER FLINCHED. NOT A GODDAMN MUSCLE.

THE MUTATED COLOK JUST SAT THERE, FROZEN LIKE A GIANT COBRA. I THOUGHT THAT WAS IT.

I DIDN'T NOTICE THE FIRST CONVULSION, BUT EACH ONE AFTER THAT GREW MORE INTENSELY VIOLENT.

THE MUTATED COLOK JUST SAT THERE, FROZEN LIKE A GIANT COBRA. I THOUGHT THAT WAS IT.

I DIDN'T NOTICE THE FIRST CONVULSION, BUT EACH ONE AFTER THAT GREW MORE INTENSELY VIOLENT.

ITS THRASHING BECAME A BLUR BEFORE IT ENDED ITS OWN PAIN BY VOMITING UP WHAT WAS POISONING IT:

THE COUNT.

ITS THRASHING BECAME A BLUR BEFORE IT ENDED ITS OWN PAIN BY VOMITING UP WHAT WAS POISONING IT:

THE COUNT.

HE ROLLED AROUND A BIT AFTER THE UNHOLY ABORTION, THEN LET FLY A STREAM OF DIALECT NOT FROM THIS PLANET.

What happened next I don't remember, except that it felt as if a herd of animals was being stuffed inside me.

HE ROLLED AROUND A BIT AFTER THE UNHOLY ABORTION, THEN LET FLY A STREAM OF DIALECT NOT FROM THIS PLANET.

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT I DON'T REMEMBER, EXCEPT THAT IT FELT AS IF A HERD OF ANIMALS WAS BEING STUFFED INSIDE ME.

HE ROLLED AROUND A BIT AFTER THE UNHOLY ABORTION, THEN LET FLY A STREAM OF DIALECT NOT FROM THIS PLANET.

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HE TOLD ME AFTERWARDS
I WAS UNCONSCIOUS
FOR ONLY A FEW SECONDS.

THAT WAS GOOD,
HE SAID.



COME ON,
BOY. CAPTURE
IT. CONTROL IT.
HARNESS ITS
POWER.

YOU
MUST.

IF ANY OF
US ARE GOING
TO LIVE THROUGH
THIS, YOU HAVE TO
LEARN HOW TO
CAGE THE
DEMONS.

MORE RIDDLES. AS
THE PAIN PASSED, MY
CONFUSION DIDN'T. BUT
IT WASN'T THE TIME
FOR QUESTIONS.



THAT COULD WAIT. I
NEEDED SOMETHING
MORE IMPORTANT.

HELP ME.
PLEASE.

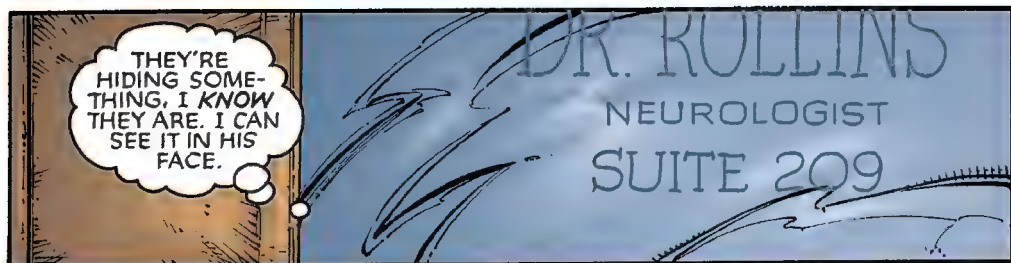


I'VE BEEN
TRYING, AL. DON'T
YOU UNDERSTAND?
WHY DO YOU THINK
I'M HERE?

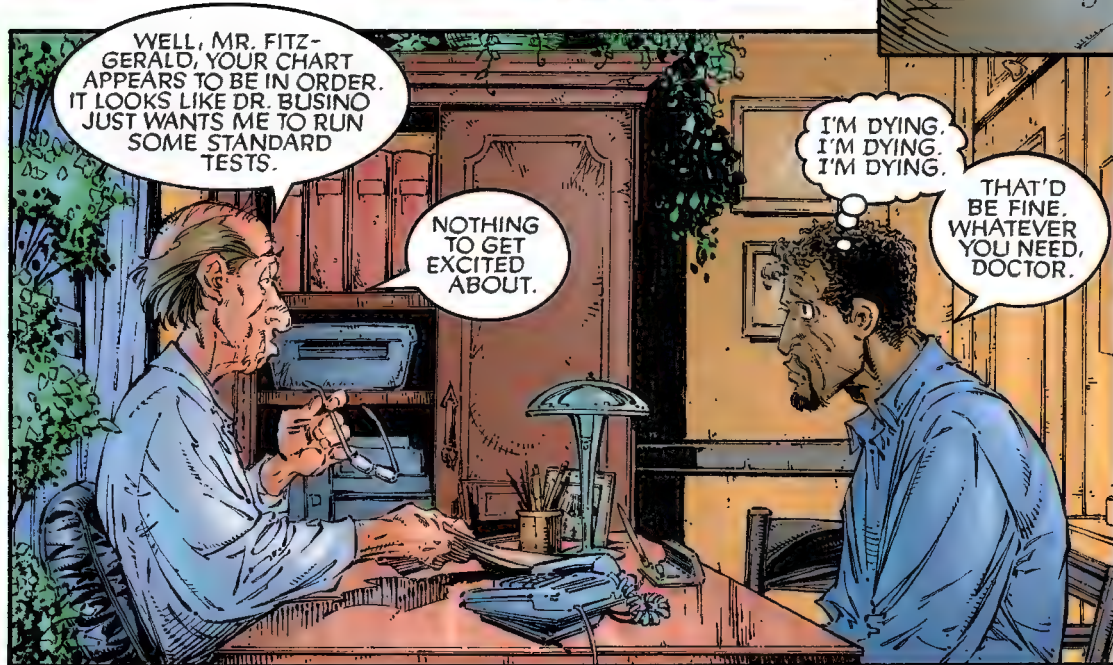
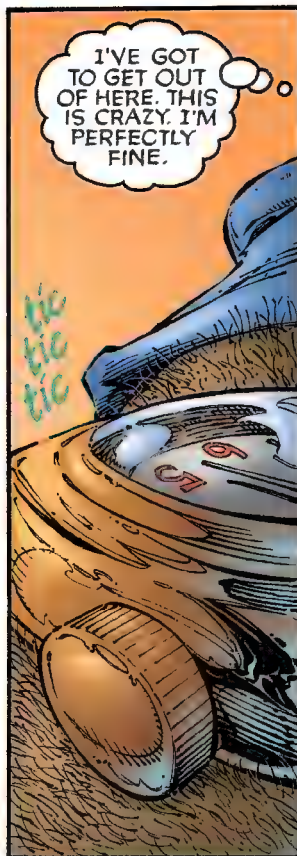
BECAUSE
OF YOU.

MY
APPEARANCE
HERE *ISN'T*
AN ACCIDENT.
NEITHER IS
YOURS.

WE NEED
EACH OTHER.
SO DO OUR
SOULS.



THEY'RE HIDING SOMETHING, I KNOW THEY ARE. I CAN SEE IT IN HIS FACE.



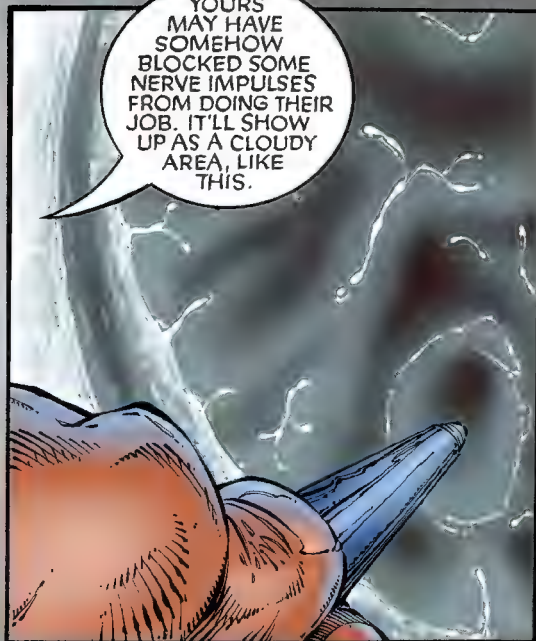
PLEASE, MR. FITZGERALD. IT'S OKAY TO BE A LITTLE ANXIOUS. MOST PATIENTS ARE THE FIRST TIME. COME, LET ME SHOW YOU WHAT WE'LL BE LOOKING FOR IN YOUR C.T. SCAN.

HERE'S AN X-RAY OF A TYPICAL BRAIN. EACH AREA SERVES A SPECIFIC NEED SUCH AS MOTOR SKILLS, THOUGHT PROCESSES.

WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO DETERMINE IS IF THERE IS A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN YOUR RECENT BLACKOUT AND THE COLD YOU HAD. SEE SOME VIRUSES TRIGGER CERTAIN CHEMICAL REACTIONS IN OUR BODIES.



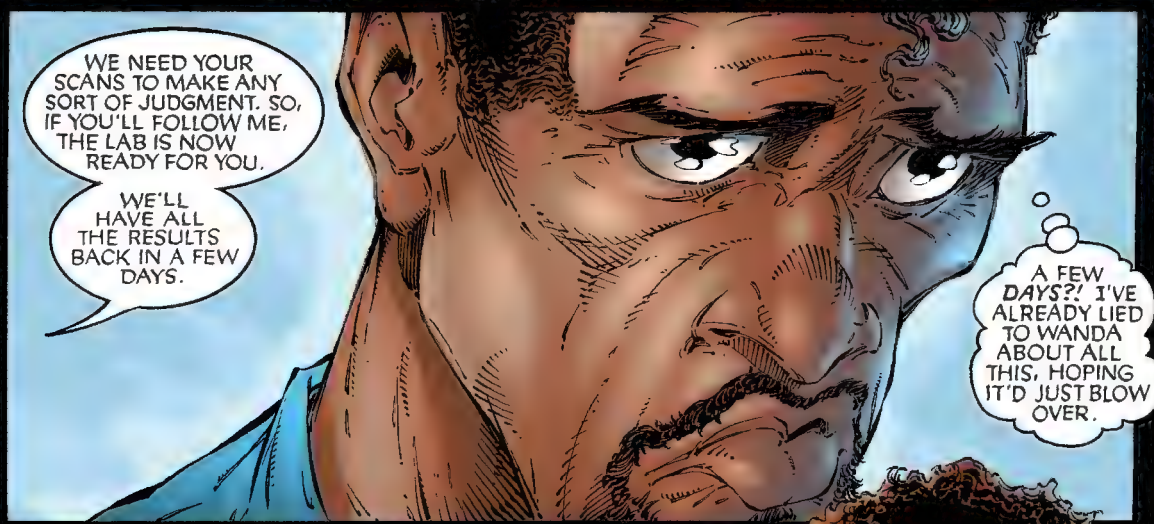
YOURS MAY HAVE SOMEHOW BLOCKED SOME NERVE IMPULSES FROM DOING THEIR JOB. IT'LL SHOW UP AS A CLOUDY AREA, LIKE THIS.



WE NEED YOUR SCANS TO MAKE ANY SORT OF JUDGMENT. SO, IF YOU'LL FOLLOW ME, THE LAB IS NOW READY FOR YOU.

WE'LL HAVE ALL THE RESULTS BACK IN A FEW DAYS.

A FEW DAYS?? I'VE ALREADY LIED TO WANDA ABOUT ALL THIS, HOPING IT'D JUST BLOW OVER.



"NOW I HAVE TO KEEP THIS UP SOME MORE."

Um... NO, I'M SORRY, WANDA, HE'S IN A MEETING. HE SHOULD BE BACK IN A COUPLE HOURS.



I'LL TELL HIM YOU PHONED.

THANKS, JULIA.

THAT'S STRANGE. HE NEVER MENTIONED A MEETING THIS MORNING.





NEW YORK CITY.
THE CONCRETE JUNGLE.

WITHIN
THE JUNGLE
NOW LURKS
THE BEAST.

HE'S MADE IT.
AFTER A JOURNEY
OF NEARLY A
MONTH, HE NOW
SMELLS THE
STENCH OF MAN.

BUT IT'S ONE IN
PARTICULAR WHOSE
BLOOD HE SEEKS.

SIM-
ONZ

IT'S BEEN A HELL OF A WEEK FOR TERRY. TWO SECURITY SYSTEMS OVERHAULED. DOZENS OF INTERLACED PHONE CONVERSATIONS. ANXIETY OVER TEST RESULTS.

AND ALL THE WHILE RECONSTRUCTING JASON WYNN'S MURDER CONSPIRACY AGAINST HIM.

THE ONLY THING I STILL CAN'T FIGURE IS WHY HE'D TRANSFER ME TO HIS OFFICE AFTER THE WHOLE INCIDENT BLEW OVER. HE CERTAINLY KNOWS I DON'T HAVE ANY POWER OVER HIM.

WELL, *WHATEVER* HE'S PLANNING, IT'S ABOUT TO GET CLIPPED.

I JUST WISH I DIDN'T FEEL SO *TIRED*. NOW'S NOT THE TIME TO FEEL WEAK. I'M ABOUT TO WALK INTO THE MIDDLE OF A MINEFIELD.

THE WORLD BEGINS TO SPIN AS HIS MIND WANDERS. IMAGES DISTORT. HE BLINKS FRANTICALLY, TRYING TO REGAIN HIS FOCUS.

IT ONLY GETS WORSE.

THEN IT
STOPS.

LEAVING HIM IN
TOTAL DARKNESS.

POW
Honnnnnnk

THE CAR JERKS
AS HE SLUMPS
ACROSS THE
STEERING WHEEL.

IT'S HIS SECOND
BLACKOUT IN
SEVEN DAYS.

HrONKk

LEAVING HIM COMPLETELY
AT THE MERCY OF OTHERS.

Holy
SH...!!

uh....
what?

HE TRIES
TO REACT.

TOO
LATE.

THEN ALL GOES
DARK AGAIN.



CAN YOU BELIEVE OUR LUCK, TWITCH?! A BURGERWORLD SO CLOSE TO OUR NEW OFFICE...!



THE GODS ARE DEFINITELY SENDING US A MESSAGE, SIR.

SIR?

Mmmmm...
THE 'BELLY BUSTER' WITH EXTRA CHEESE!
→ slurp ←

AS THE DETECTIVES PREPARE TO LEAVE...

Oh, no.

BANG!

COVER ME, SIR, I THINK IT CAME FROM THE BUILDING FRONT.

WHOA!

EASY, BOY! PUT THAT GUN AWAY, NOW. IT'S JUST THE CAR--IT BLEW A ROD OR SOMETHING.

YOU'VE BEEN EDGY LATELY. WHAT'S UP?

I DON'T KNOW. MAYBE IT'S THAT FILE SOMEONE DROPPED OFF. I KEEP THINKING WE'RE BEING WATCHED. JESUS, WHAT DO WE DO NOW? YOU'VE ALREADY SPENT ALL YOUR MONEY ON THE OFFICE.

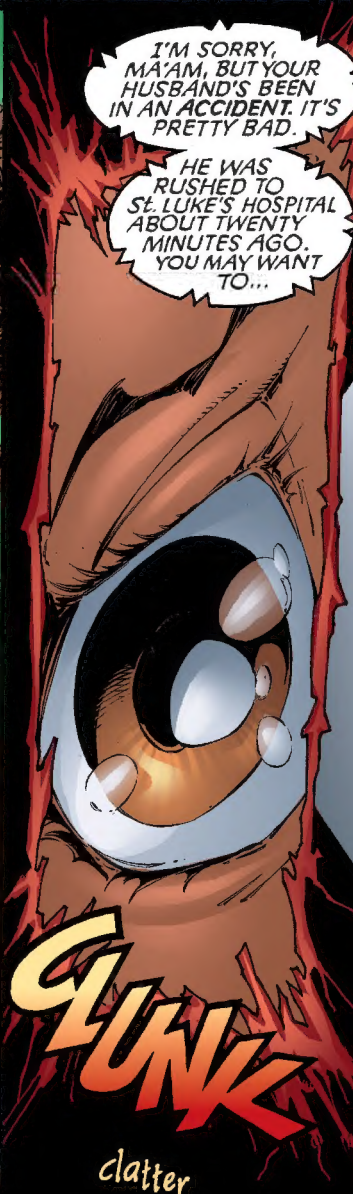
NOT ALL OF IT. I'VE GOT A LITTLE SURPRISE COMING.



HELLO?

THIS IS
SGT. FRITSCH
OF THE NEW YORK
CITY POLICE, MA'AM.
ARE YOU WANDA
BLAKE, TERRY
FITZGERALD'S
WIFE?

YES,
WHY?
WHAT'S
WRONG?



I'M SORRY,
MA'AM, BUT YOUR
HUSBAND'S BEEN
IN AN ACCIDENT. IT'S
PRETTY BAD.

HE WAS
RUSHED TO
ST. LUKE'S HOSPITAL
ABOUT TWENTY
MINUTES AGO.
YOU MAY WANT
TO...

clatter



HELLO?

HELLO?
MA'AM?





Tyrant
Lizard
King

EMPIRE